

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 10-15 and 20-23 are pending in this application. Claims 1-5, 10-14 and 20-22 are allowed. Claims 15 and 23 are rejected. Claims 15 and 23 are canceled herein.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Claim 23 is herein canceled. Applicants submit that this cancellation obviates the rejection.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kanba et al. (U.S. Patent 5,294,477).

Claim 15 is herein canceled. Applicants submit that this cancellation obviates the rejection.

Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nakano et al. (U.S. Patent 5,476,728).

Claim 23 is herein canceled. Applicants submit that this cancellation obviates the rejection.

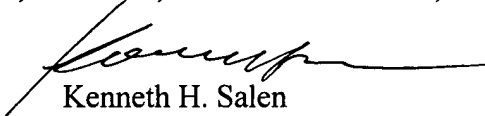
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

Response under 37 C.F.R. §1.116
Attorney Docket No. 020170
Serial No. 10/071,131

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP


Kenneth H. Salen
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 43,077
Telephone: (202) 822-1100
Facsimile: (202) 822-1111

KHS/lde